DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 630 CS 505 165

AUTHOR Smith, Ted J., III; Hogan, J. Michael
TITLE Opinion Polls and the Panama Canal Treaties of 1977: A Critical Analysis.
PUB DATE 17 May 85
NOTE 73p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (40th, McAfee, NJ, May 17, 1985). Funds for the study provided by a grant from the Research Policy Council of the University of Virginia.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Content Analysis; Debate; Federal Legislation; Foreign Policy; *Media Research; *News Media; *Press Opinion; *Public Opinion; Public Support; Responses; United States History
IDENTIFIERS News Bias; *Opinion Polls; *Panama Canal; Treaties

ABSTRACT

Noting that 1977 public opinion polls concerning the new Panama Canal treaties were interpreted as showing increased support for the treaties, this paper contends that this interpretation was erroneous and that the major outcome of the extensive polling was misleading data. The paper is divided into three major analytical sections. The first section examines all poll results to establish a coherent picture of public opinion. The second section analyzes polling procedures and news releases, and reveals instances of flawed questions and misinterpretations of findings. The third section shows that coverage in selected national print and broadcast media was selective, often incomplete, and sometimes erroneous. The paper concludes with recommendations for alleviating these problems. (Author/HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED264630

OPINION POLLS AND THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES OF 1977: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Ted J. Smith III
and
J. Michael Hogan
University of Virginia

Presented to the

40th Annual Conference
American Association
for
Public Opinion Research
McAfee, New Jersey
May 17, 1985

CS 505 165

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Ted J. Smith III

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their gratitude to Dr. Bernard Roshco, Director of the Office of Opinion Analysis and Plans at the U.S. Department of State, for his invaluable assistance in the early phases of the study. Dr. Roshco, of course, bears no responsibility for the contents or conclusions of this study.

Funds for the study were provided by a grant from the Research Policy Council of the University of Virginia.

ABSTRACT

In April, 1978, after nine months of national debate, the Senate narrowly ratified new Panama Canal treaties. Voting was apparently influenced by numerous opinion polls, which were interpretted as showing increased support for the treaties. But several analysts have demonstrated that this interpretation was erroneous, public opinion consistently opposed the treaties. Thus it seems that the major outcome of extensive polling was production of misleading data which were used to frustrate the public will. This study seeks to determine what went wrong. It is divided into three major analytical sections.

The first examines all poll results to establish a coherent picture of public opinion. The second analyzes polling procedures and news releases and reveals instances of flawed questions and misinterpretations of findings. The third section shows that coverage in selected national print and broadcast media was selective, often incomplete and sometimes erroneous. The study concludes with recommendations for alleviating these problems.

On September 6, 1977, after nearly thirteen years of intermittent negotiations, Presidents Jimmy Carter of the United States and Omar Torrijos of Panama met in Washington, D.C., to sign two new treaties governing the status of the Panama Canal. The first of these, known as the Panama Canal Treaty, acknowledged Panama's sovereignty over the Canal Zone and provided for the U.S. to gradually shift complete control of the Canal to Panama by the year 2000. The second, known as the Neutrality Treaty, provided for the continued neutrality of the Canal after the year 2000 and granted the U.S. some rights of defense and transit in times of emergency.

Following these ceremonies, the treaties were submitted to the U.S. Senate for ratification. This was hardly a formality. Approval required a two-thirds majority (67 votes), but most commentators counted twenty-five Senators opposed to the treaties and as many as forty uncommitted. More important, it soon became clear that the crucial defense and transit provisions of the Neutrality Treaty were open to widely divergent interpretations. In an attempt to resolve this problem, Presidents Carter and Torrijos issued a "Statement of Understanding" concerning the meaning of the provisions on October 14. However, it was quickly pointed out that the Statement was not binding. This led to calls by a number of Senators, including some prominent treaty supporters, for the text of the Statement to be incorporated in the Neutrality Treaty in the form of two amendments, known as the "leadership amendments." Because they figured so heavily in the subsequent ratification debate, it will be useful to note the exact wording of these amendments. The first sought to clarify U.S. defense rights:

> Under the Treaty Concerning the Permanent Neutrality and Operation of the Panama Canal (the Neutrality Treaty), Panama and the United States have the responsibility to assure that the Panama Canal will remain open and secure to ships of all nations. The correct interpretation of this principle is that each of the two countries shall, in accordance with their respective constitutional processes, defend the Canal against any threat to the regime of neutrality, and consequently shall have the right to act against any aggression or threat directed against the Canal or against the peaceful transit of vessels through the Canal.
>
> This does not mean, nor shall it be interpreted as a right of intervention of the United States in the internal affairs of Panama. Any United States action will be directed at insuring that the Canal will remain open, secure and accessible, and it shall never be directed against the territorial integrity or political independence of Panama. (U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, 1979, 365-6.)

The second sought to clarify transit rights:

> The Neutrality Treaty provides that the vessels of war and auxiliary vessels of the United States and Panama will be entitled to transit the Canal expeditiously. This is intended, and it shall be so interpreted, to assure transit of such vessels through the Canal as quickly as possible, without any impediment, with expedited treatment, and in case of need or emergency, to go to the head of the line of vessels, in order to transit the Canal rapidly. (U.S., Congress, Senate, Comittee on Foreign Relations, 1979, 374.)

The treaties were eventually approved by the Committee on Foreign Relations in January, 1978, by a vote of 14-1. The Senate, sitting as a Committee of the Whole, began debate on the Neutrality Treaty on February 8. The debate was dominated by the issue of defense and transit rights. Briefly, treaty supporters claimed that the leadership amendments made clear that the United States could take whatever action was necessary to defend the Canal against any threat, and that whenever the United States determined that an emergency existed it could move its warships to the head of the line to transit the Canal. By contrast, conservative opponents of the treaties:

> . . . wondered how the U.S. would exercise its right to defend the canal, since the treaties provided for removing all U.S. troops and bases by the year 2000. They also argued that the amendment would give Panama a "veto" over any U.S. action in the Canal Zone once it became Panamanian territory, since it prohibited interference in the "internal affairs" of Panama. Finally, they pointed out that the amendment merely incorporated the "Statement of Understanding," which had not silenced Panama's differing interpretations of key provisions. Most important, it remained unclear whether the U.S. would need Panama's permission to defend the Canal.
>
> Treaty opponents argued that the second leadership amendment, while theoretically guaranteeing the right of priority passage during emergencies, neither described nor defined "emergency"; nor did it specify who would decide whether an emergency existed. (Hogan, forthcoming, emphasis in original.)

In the end, the Senate rejected all attempts to strengthen the language of the leadership amendments and they were adopted by overwhelming majorities. On March 16, the Neutrality Treaty was ratified by a vote of 68-32, one more than required. After a further month of debate, which also centered on defense and transit rights, the Panama Canal Treaty was ratified by an identical vote.

Opinion polls figured prominently in all phases of the debate. At least 41 national surveys on the topic were reported by ten different polling organizations over a four year period. Although at first nearly all seemed to show strong opposition to the treaties, results of later polls were quite diverse. For example, results reported in February during the height of the Senate debate ranged from 72-19% disapproval to 54-40% approval, depending upon the question asked. But treaty supporters, backed by much of the national media and some pollsters, discerned in the findings of later polls evidence of a dramatic "turnabout" in public opinion. This had two aspects (Hogan, forthcoming). First, they saw a clear trend toward increased support of the treaties, which they attributed to improved knowledge of the issues by the public. This claim appears to have been based largely on the results of three widely disseminated Gallup polls. Second, supporters argued that

a plurality or majority of the public would support the treaties if the leadership amendments were added to them. This claim was based on the results of several polls which showed massive reversals of opinion from opposition to support when respondents were asked if they would approve treaties amended to guarantee U.S. rights of military intervention and emergency transit.

Regardless of the merit of this interpretation of the poll results, it does appear to have been almost universally accepted by the national news media, the Carter Administration, and pro-treaty senators (Carter, 1982, 152-85; Moffett, 1985, 112-4; Hogan, forthcoming). Much more important, the successful dissemination of this interpretation may have been the decisive factor in the ratification of the treaties. There are two major arguments for this conclusion, one simple and one complex.

The simple argument begins by noting that the problem facing the Carter Administration was to convince a sufficient number of undecided senators to vote for ratification. Early polls showing massive public opposition to the treaties were thus a major impediment. As ardent treaty supporter Senator George McGovern noted, the Senate could not "make a foreign policy commitment that does not have broad political support here at home" (cited in Moffett, 1985, 114). The apparent "turnabout" in the polls largely removed this impediment, especially if the leadership amendments were added to the treaties. As Moffett (1985, 114) has asserted: "For an issue on which such an inordinately high premium was placed on visible expressions of public support, the polls appeared to provide the critical margin of safety for undecided senators hard-pressed by vocal opponents of ratification at home."

The more complex argument has been developed by Hogan (forthcoming). At the risk of gross oversimplification, it can be summarized as follows. The treaties were ratified

by the slim margin of two votes. But at least six senators are on record as saying that the leadership amendments were the critical factor in their decisions to support the treaties. There appear to be two reasons why the leadership amendments could have been so crucial. The first is the belief that they strengthened U.S. interests significantly by establishing residual defense and transit rights more firmly, thus making unacceptable treaties acceptable. The second reason is the belief that support for the amendments would assuage hostile public opinion, a belief buttressed by the polls showing public support for amended treaties. We cannot know for certain which, if either, of these reasons was decisive in the thinking of individual senators. But as Hogan has argued, negative Panamanian reactions to the so-called "DeConcini Reservation," a nonbinding condition attached to the Neutrality Treaty which sought to spell out the guarantees supposedly embodied in the leadership amendments, showed that the leadership amendments did not in fact provide those guarantees. The facts that pro-treaty senators did not seek new guarantees, but instead added an "unprinted reservation" to the Panama Canal Treaty which functioned to "nullify" (Boeth, et al., 1978, 28) the DeConcini Reservation, strongly suggest that support for the leadership amendments was not grounded in the belief that they would strengthen U.S. interests. Thus it seems more plausible to conclude that support for the leadership amendments was grounded in the belief that they would assuage hostile public opinion. And this belief was based largely on the "turnabout" supposedly shown by the polls.

All of this underscores the crucial role that the pro-treaty interpretation of public opinion played in ratification of the Panama Canal treaties. Unfortunately, two detailed studies of the poll results on this issue show that the pro-treaty interpretation was wholly erroneous. Roshco examined the questions and findings of 25 polls for evidence of "trends." He concludes (1978, 562): "When it was all over, the basic finding of approximately five to three opposed that had emerged when the issue of the treaties became salient seemed to have re-emerged. The trend that was confirmed most

strongly could have been graphed with a straight horizontal line." His most compelling evidence comes from three polls conducted after the amended treaties had been ratified. These show almost the identical level of strong opposition to the treaties as found in the earliest comparable polls, conducted before the ratification debate even began. This evidence refutes both aspects of the pro-treaty interpretation. Moffett, based on an even larger study of 29 polls, reaches similar conclusions (1985, 116):

> The fact is that throughout the ratification period, and extending well before and after, public opinion on the Panama Canal treaties remained almost completely static. Despite one of the most extensive public relations efforts undertaken on any foreign-policy issue in American history, public attitudes never budged. That the contrary perception was so universally held makes Panama a near-perfect example of the hazards of pegging complex public issues to perceived public attitudes.

These findings should be of the gravest concern to students of public opinion. They suggest that the primary result of extensive professional polling on a major foreign policy issue was the production of misleading findings which were used to frustrate the public will. This study seeks to determine what went wrong in polling on the Panama Canal treaties. It is divided into four parts. The first part arrays the findings of the various polls on the topic and organizes them into a consistent pattern. It concludes that the interpretation provided by Roshco and Moffatt is basically correct. The second part examines the poll questions and procedures to see how they might have contributed to the misinterpretation of the findings. This analysis is extended in the third part to coverage of the polls by selected national news media (the New York Times, Time, Newsweek, and commercial network television newscasts). The paper concludes with a set of recommendations which might reduce the probability of future problems of the types discovered.

Polls on the Panama Canal Treaties

In this section, we array the various polls on the Panama Canal treaties and organize them into a consistent pattern. Because at least two other authors have attempted similar projects, this requires some justification. Roshco's (1978) analysis of poll questions and results is accurate, perceptive, and adequate for his purposes, but incomplete. He examines results from only 25 national polls (out of a total of at least 41), omits mention of some questions from those, and provides no systematic framework for interpreting the full set of findings. Moffett's study, part of a book-length discussion of the treaties, is potentially superior. In Chapter 4 (112-137), he examines responses to similarly worded poll questions in order to demonstrate the lack of any pro-treaty trend and then seeks to explain the Carter Administration's failure to influence public opinion on the issue. In Appendix A (209-214), he reports the texts of the various questions asked in 29 national polls and groups them into four analytical categories based on content. Unfortunately, Moffett's work falls far short of its potential. He suggests early in the book (14) that his grasp of polling and public opinion is less than complete; Chapter 4 demonstrates this beyond a shadow of a doubt. For example, he refers repeatedly (123; 136) to poll questions being answered under "controlled conditions" in "laboratory settings." Or again, his elitist analysis of the Carter Administration's failure to influence public opinion incorporates a gaping contradiction and is based on a model of opinion change that could only be charitably described as quaint. More important, his work displays numerous and often serious errors. This is most readily apparent in Appendix A, where he reports texts and responses for 39 poll questions. Here questions and polls are inexplicably omitted, poll dates are an unsystematic mixture of interview dates and release dates, subsample responses are unlabeled, some questions are misquoted, one Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) poll is reported as two and two CBS polls are reported as one, and so on. Therefore, because Roshco's study is limited, and Moffett's is both limited and flawed, it seems necessary to begin our analysis

with a description of the polls conducted on this topic.

Table 1 lists the responses to 50 questions asked by 10 polling organizations in 41 national polls conducted in the period 1975-78. Table 1 does not include all of the questions relevant to the Panama Canal asked in those 41 surveys, but only those designed to measure approval or disapproval of the treaties or the concept of ceding control of the Canal to Panama. Also excluded are those polls which asked respondents to rate the handling of the Panama Canal issue by Congress and/or President Carter or the importance of the Panama Canal issue. It must be stressed that although Table 1 provides the most comprehensive summary of polls on the Panama Canal treaty yet attempted it should still be treated as provisional. There are two reasons for this. First, although Table 1 includes all questions of the kind described above that we were able to locate in an extensive search, it still may not be exhaustive. Second, it has been possible so far to verify only about 75% of the information in Table 1 against original news releases or survey reports. The remainder of the information is taken from Roshco (1978) or Moffett (1985). This is particularly problematic in the case of the Caddell polls, most of which were reported only in Moffett's study.

Bearing this warning in mind, Table 1 shows at least two noteworthy aspects of polling on the Panama Canal treaties. The first is the great disparity in results across polls using comparable samples. The extremes are provided by the 78-8% negative finding of the May, 1977, ORC poll and the 63-24% positive finding of the October, 1977, CBS poll, a difference of about 55% over 5 months. But second, as noted by both Roshco and Moffett, there is very little evidence of any pro-treaty trend if the results of polls using only the same questions are examined. In fact, only two pairs of polls show any evidence of such a trend. The Gallup polls fielded in September, 1977, and

January, 1978, show a shift in net difference (approval-disapproval) across the total sample from -10 to +6; similarly, the last two ORC polls, fielded in May, 1977, and February, 1978, show a significant change from -70 to -53. Across the full set of four ORC polls, however, the change is only from -54 (June, 1975) to -53 (February, 1978). By way of contrast, comparison of responses to identical questions in various series of Caddell, CBS and Roper polls shown net decreases in support for the treaties.

Of course, if one examines only the responses shown in Table 1, there does appear to be a general increase in support for the treaties until about April of 1978, after which support seems to decrease dramatically. But this appearance is misleading, as can be shown by grouping the various questions on the basis of similarity of content. As noted above, Moffett has already proposed one such classification scheme, which he uses to divide his set of poll questions into four categories. Questions in his first category "dealt exclusively with the matter of ownership and control of the Canal, without reference to the treaties and without qualifications pertaining either to the possible length of a transition period or to residual rights actually defined in the 1977 treaty." He places only four ORC questions (numbers 1a, 2, 8 and 29a in Table 1) in this category. Questions in his second category "either made no reference to the sensitive issue of the transfer of ownership and control of the Canal to Panama . . . or, where such reference was made, appended some qualifying language . . . that altered the perception of immediacy. He places 21 questions (numbers 1b, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20a, 22, 23, 25, 26a, 32b, 33a and 37) in this category. Questions in his third category contained "more specific information about rights which the United States would retain under the treaty but without specific reference to the so-called leadership amendments." He places six questions (numbers 11, 16, 21b, 24, 31 and 32a) in this category. Questions in his fourth category included "the actual details of the leadership amendments" (Moffett, 1985, 123). He

Table 1: National Polls on the Panama Canal Treaties, Chronological Listing

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
1	Int 4-6 Jun 75 Rel 25 Jun 75	Opinion Research Corporation (ORC)	a. Do you favor the United States continuing its ownership and control of the Panama Canal, or do you favor turning ownership and control of the Panama Canal over to the Republic of Panama?	All	12 Turn over 66 Continue 22 No opinion
			b. As you may know, when a treaty is negotiated with a foreign country, the treaty has to be voted on by the U.S. Senate. If a treaty is negotiated turning over ownership and control of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama, do you think the U.S. Senate should approve or disapprove of such a Treaty?	All	29 Should 48 Should not 23 No opinion
2	Apr 76	ORC	Do you favor the United States continuing its ownership and control of the Panama Canal or do you favor turning ownership and control of the Panama Canal over to the Republic of Panama?	All	12 Turn over 75 Continue 13 No opinion
3	Int 19-23 May 76 Rel 27 May 76	CBS/ NY Times	Do you agree or disagree with the statement that our government should eventually return control of the Panama Canal to the Government of Panama?	All	24 Agree 52 Disagree 24 Undecided
4	Int 12-19 Jun 76	Roper	Do you think the time has come for us to modify our Panama Canal treaty, or that we should insist on keeping the treaty as originally signed?	All	26 Modify 46 Keep 28 Don't know
5	Int 15-20 Jun 76	CBS/NYT	Do you agree or disagree with the statement that our government should eventually return control of the Panama Canal to the Government of Panama?	All	22 Agree 57 Disagree 21 Undecided
6	Int 8-22 Jan 77	Roper	Do you think the time has come for us to modify our Panama Canal treaty, or that we should insist on keeping the treaty as originally signed?	All	24 Modify 53 Keep 23 Don't know
7	Int 14-17 Mar 77 Rel for 4 Apr 77	Yankelovich	Do you favor or oppose giving the Panama Canal back to the Panamanians, even if we maintain our right to defend it?	All	29 Favor 53 Oppose 18 Undecided

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
8	Int 4-7 May 77	ORC	Do you favor the United States continuing its ownership and control of the Panama Canal, or do you favor turning ownership and control of the Panama Canal over to the Republic of Panama?	All	8 Turn over 78 Continue 14 No opinion
9	May 77	Caddell	Do you think the United States should negotiate a treaty with Panama where, over a period of time, Panama will eventually own and run the Canal?	?	27 Should 51 Should not 22 Undecided
10	Int 2-3 Aug 77	NBC	Do you think the U.S. should sign a treaty which would eventually return control of the Panama Canal Zone to the government of Panama, or don't you think so?	All	27 Should 55 Should not 18 Undecided
11	Int 18-22 Aug 77 Rel 4 Sep 77	Gallup	The proposed new treaty between the U.S. and Panama calls for the U.S. to turn over ownership of the Canal to Panama at the end of the century. However, the U.S. will retain control over the land and installations necessary to operate and defend the Canal. Do you approve or disapprove of this proposed new treaty?	Aware (76%)	39 Approve 46 Disapprove 15 No opinion
12	Int 20-27 Aug 77	Roper	Do you think the time has come for us to modify our Panama Canal treaty, or that we should insist on keeping the treaty as originally signed?	All	28 Modify 44 Keep 28 Don't know
13	Sep 77	Caddell	The Government announced last week that we have concluded a treaty with Panama to return some parts of the Canal, the Canal Zone, and operating revenues of the Canal to Panama. From what you have heard, do you favor or oppose the treaty?	?	26 Favor 49 Oppose 25 Undecided
14	Sep 77	Associated Press	Last week, President Carter signed a treaty that means the U.S. would relinquish control of the Panama Canal by the year 2000. Now the Senate must decide whether or not to ratify the treaty. Do you think the Senate should approve the treaty concerning the Panama Canal?	?	29 Yes 50 No 21 Undecided

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
15	Int 24 Sep-1 Oct 77	Roper	Do you think the time has come for us to modify our Panama Canal treaty, or that we should insist on keeping the treaty as originally signed?	All	27 Modify 53 Keep 20 Don't know
16	Int 30 Sep-3 Oct 77 Rel 23 Oct 77	Gallup	The treaties would give Panama full control over the Panama Canal and the Canal Zone by the year 2000, but the United States would retain the right to defend the canal against a third nation. Do you favor or oppose these treaties between the U.S. and Panama?	All Aware (74%) Unaware (26%)	36 Favor 46 Oppose 18 No opinion 40 Favor 48 Oppose 12 No opinion 23 Favor 39 Oppose 38 No opinion
17	Oct 77	Caddell	From what you know about the treaty, do you generally favor or oppose it?	?	30 Favor 55 Oppose 15 Undecided
18	Int 3-4 Oct 77 Rel 6 Oct 77	NBC	The new treaty between the United States and Panama calls for the United States to turn over ownership of the canal to Panama at the end of this century. However, this treaty still has to be approved by the Senate. Do you favor or oppose approval of this treaty by the Senate?	Aware (75%)	30 Favor 61 Oppose 9 Not sure
19	Rel 20 Oct 77	Harris	As you know, President Carter asked the U.S. Senate to vote approval of a new treaty between the U.S. and Panama which will hand control of the Panama Canal back to Panama by the year 2000. Would you favor or oppose the U.S. Senate approving this treaty with Panama?	All	26 Favor 51 Oppose 23 Not sure
20	Int 23-26 Oct 77 Rel 1 Nov 77	CBS/NYT	a. The Senate now has to debate the treaties that President Carter signed granting control of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama in the year 2000. Do you approve or disapprove of these treaties?	All	29 Approve 49 Disapprove 22 No opinion

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
			b. Suppose you felt the treaties provided that the United States could always send in troops to keep the Canal open to ships of all nations. Would you then approve of the treaties?	Disapprove/ no opinion on Q. 20a	48 Approve 34 Disapprove 18 No opinion
				Combine 20a Approve with 20b	63 Approve 24 Disapprove 13 No opinion
21	Int 29 Oct-5 Nov 77	Roper	a. There has been a good deal of discussion recently as to whether or not the United States should negotiate a new treaty with Panama concerning the Panama Canal. Do you think the time has come for us to modify our Panama Canal treaty, or that we should insist on keeping the treaty as it was originally signed?	Split sample	31 Modify 50 Keep 19 Don't know
			b. In September, the Presidents of the United States and Panama signed two treaties which would gradually turn the Panama Canal over to the Panamanians but would provide for the continued use and defense of the Canal by the United States. Before these treaties can take effect, the United States Senate must act on them. Do you think the Senate should vote for the new treaties or against them?	Split sample	33 For 47 Against 20 Don't know
22	Nov 77	Roger Seasonwein Associates	The Senate is now considering a new Panama Canal Treaty that President Carter has submitted to it. The treaty calls for Panama to become owner of the Canal in the year 2000. Are you inclined to favor or oppose this treaty?	?	28 Favor 59 Oppose 13 Undecided
23	Dec 77	Caddell	a. As you may know, the US Senate is currently considering whether to approve or disapprove of the Panama Canal treaty, whereby the U.S. would turn over the Panama Canal to the government of Panama by the year 2000. From what you know right now, would you favor or oppose passage of that treaty?	?	26 Favor 53 Oppose 21 Undecided

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
			b. Let's say the Panama Canal treaty contained a clause which allowed the U.S. to defend the Canal forever. Would you then favor or oppose ratification?	?	49 Favor 30 Oppose 21 Undecided
24	Int 6-9 Jan 78 Rel 2 Feb 78	Gallup	The treaties would give Panama full control over the Panama Canal and the Canal Zone by the year 2000, but the United States would retain the right to defend the canal against a third nation. Do you favor or oppose these treaties between the U.S. and Panama?	All Aware (81%) Unaware (19%)	43 Favor 37 Oppose 20 No opinion 45 Favor 42 Oppose 13 No opinion 34 Favor 16 Oppose 50 No opinion
25	Int 8-12 Jan 78 Rel 17 Jan 78	CBS/NYT	As you know, the Senate now has to debate the treaties that President Carter signed granting control of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama in the year 2000. Do you approve or disapprove of those treaties?	All	29 Approve 51 Disapprove 20 No opinion
26	Int 10-11 Jan 78 Rel 13 Jan 78	NBC	a. The new treaty between the United States and Panama calls for the United States to turn over ownership of the canal to Panama at the end of this century. However, this treaty still has to be approved by the Senate. Do you favor or oppose approval of this treaty, in its present form, by the United States Senate?	Aware (77%)	28 Favor 62 Oppose 10 Not sure
			b. Would you favor or oppose approval of the Panama Canal treaty if an amendment were added specifically giving the United States the right to intervene if the canal is threatened by attack?	Aware (77%)	65 Favor 25 Oppose 10 Not sure
27	Feb 78	Caddell	Let's say the Panama Canal treaty contained a clause which allowed the U.S. to defend the Canal forever. Would you then favor or oppose ratification?	?	47 Favor 37 Oppose 16 Undecided

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
28	Feb 78	Harris	a. Do you favor or oppose the U.S. Senate approving the proposed treaties with Panama on the Panama Canal?	?	31 Favor 40 Oppose 29 Not sure
			b. The original treaties have been changed to allow the use of U.S. military force to defend the canal in an emergency and to allow U.S. warships priority in going through the canal in an emergency. In general, do you tend to agree or disagree with these changes in the Panama Canal treaty?	?	56 Agree 20 Disagree 24 Not sure
			c. With the new changes, do you favor or oppose the proposed treaties with Panama on the Panama Canal?	?	38 Favor 33 Oppose 29 Not sure
29	Feb 78	ORC	a. Do you favor the United States continuing its ownership and control of the Panama Canal, or do you favor turning ownership and control of the Panama Canal over to the Republic of Panama?	All	19 Turn over 72 Continue 9 No opinion
			b. Some Senators have proposed that the Panama Canal treaties be amended to clarify that the United States can defend the Panama Canal but cannot interfere in the internal affairs or territory of Panama. Some Senators say that this amendment provides a sufficient guarantee of the rights of the United States to defend the Canal. Other Senators say that this amendment gives Panama a veto over any U.S. military activities in defense of the Canal. What is your opinion? Should the Senate accept the amendment as proposed, or should the Senate seek an amendment that specifically guarantees that the U.S. have the right to act by itself in defense of the Canal without the permission of Panama?	All	18 Accept defense position as originally proposed 68 Seek amendment guaranteeing US defense rights 14 No opinion

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
30	Int 21-22 Feb 78 Rel 1 Mar 78	NBC	The new treaty between the United States and Panama calls for the United States to turn over ownership of the canal to Panama at the end of this century. However, this treaty still has to be approved by the Senate. Would you favor or oppose approval of the Panama Canal treaty if amendments were added specifically giving the United States the right to intervene if the canal is threatened by attack and the right to send our warships to the head of the line in case of emergency?	Aware (81%)	54 Favor 40 Oppose 6 Not sure
31	Int 21-22 Mar 78 Rel 23 Mar 78	NBC	The Senate has approved one of the Panama Canal treaties, guaranteeing the right of the United States to intervene to defend the canal. The second treaty, which spells out how control of the canal will gradually be turned over to Panama by the end of this century, has not yet been ratified. Do you favor or oppose approval of this second treaty by the United States Senate?	Aware (75%)	35 Favor 55 Oppose 10 Not sure
32	Rel 3 Apr 78	Harris	a. As you know, the U.S. Senate approved one of the two treaties with Panama on the Panama Canal by 68 to 32, one vote more than was needed. The first treaty made certain that after the year 2000 the canal would be neutral in allowing ships from all countries, including the United States, to go through the canal. All in all, do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. Senate ratifying this first treaty?	All	49 Approve 41 Disapprove 10 Not sure
			b. The second treaty provides for the United States giving control of the Panama Canal to Panama after the year 2000. Do you favor or oppose the U.S. Senate approving this treaty with Panama on the Panama Canal?	All	29 Favor 60 Oppose 11 Not sure
			c. The second treaty has been changed to allow the use of U.S. military force to defend the canal in an emergency and to allow U.S. warships priority in going through the canal in an emergency. In general, do you tend to approve or disapprove of these changes in the Panama Canal treaty?	All	72 Approve 19 Disapprove 9 Not sure

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
			d. With the new changes, do you favor or oppose the proposed second treaty with Panama on the Panama Canal?	All	44 Favor 39 Oppose 17 Not sure
33	Int 3-7 Apr 78 Rel 13 Apr 78	CBS/NYT	a. As you know, the Senate is considering the two treaties granting control of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama in the year 2000. It has already approved the first treaty and is preparing to vote on the second treaty. Do you approve or disapprove of those treaties?	All	30 Approve 53 Disapprove 17 No opinion
			b. Two amendments have been added to the treaties. One allows the United States to defend the Canal beyond the year 2000. The other amendment permits U.S. ships to go through the Canal first during a national emergency. With these amendments, do you approve or disapprove of the treaties?	All	51 Approve 35 Disapprove 14 No opinion
34	Int 19-20 Apr 78 Rel 27 Apr 78	Harris	Now that the Panama Canal treaties have passed in Congress, do you feel that all in all it will be a good thing for the United States, or don't you feel that way?	All	37 Good 44 Not good 19 Not sure
35	Int 1-2 May 78	NBC	The U.S. Senate has ratified the treaties that will turn over control of the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000. The treaties were amended to include guarantees that the U.S. will have the right to defend the canal even after it is being run by the Panamanians. Do you think the Senate was correct in ratifying the treaties?	All	47 Yes 42 No 11 Not sure
36	Int May 78 Rel for 19 Jun 78	Yankelovich	Now I'd like to ask you about some of the Carter administration's foreign and domestic policies. Do you personally favor or oppose each of the following policies or haven't you made up your mind? a. Giving back the Panama Canal to the Panamanians but keeping the right to defend it.	All	33 Favor 50 Oppose 17 Haven't made up mind
37	Jun 78	Roper	Do you think the Senate should have approved the Panama Canal treaties, or should not have approved them?	?	30 Should 52 Should not 18 Undecided

#	Date	Pollster	Question	Respondents	Findings
38	Int 15-17 Jun 78 Rel 26 Jun 78	Harris	All in all, do you favor or oppose the treaties on the Panama Canal passed by the U.S. Senate?	All	35 Favor 49 Oppose 16 Not sure
39	Int 19-20 Sep 78 Rel 22 Sep 78	NBC	Do you approve or disapprove of the U.S. Senate's ratification of the treaties gradually turning over the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama by the year 2000?	All	34 Approve 56 Disapprove 10 Not sure
40	Int 16-17 Oct 78 Rel 20 Oct 78	NBC	The U.S. and Panama have signed treaties that will turn over control of the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000, and that guarantee the U.S. the right to defend the canal. Do you approve or disapprove of these treaties?	All	45 Approve 47 Disapprove 8 Not sure
41	Int 7 Nov 78 Rel 7 Nov 78	NBC	The U.S. and Panama have signed treaties that will turn over control of the Panama Canal to Panama by the year 2000, and that guarantee the U.S. the right to defend the canal. Do you approve or disapprove of these treaties?	Voters (34,450)	38 Approve 49 Disapprove 13 Not sure

places eight questions (numbers 20b, 23b, 26b, 27, 28b, 30, 32d, and 33b) in this category.

Moffett's category system does have the merit of dividing the poll questions into four roughly similar content groups which generally display increasing levels of support for the treaties. But it suffers from two serious defects. First, several questions appear to be misclassified given Moffett's category definitions. These include questions 1b, 7, 13, 31 and perhaps 20b. In some instances it is simply a matter of reclassifying the question. So, for example, question 7 should be moved from category two to category three or four. But in other cases, the matter is not that simple. Question 1b, for example, clearly does not fit in category two where Moffett has placed it. Unfortunately, it doesn't fit in any other category either. This is due to the second problem, the fact that Moffett's category system is defective. Category one, which does nothing more than list the most obvious characterists of the four identical ORC questions, presents no problems. The remaining categories do. To be placed in category two, a question must either not mention transfer of the Canal, or mention transfer but include qualifying language. The problem is that these criteria do not spell out the characteristics that all members of the category share; apparently, any question that mentions anything but transfer of the Canal would fit in category two. Thus the category is essentially ambiguous. As far as categories three and four are concerned, the only thing that distinguishes between them is whether or not specific reference is made to the actual details of the leadership amendments. Unfortunately, one of the most hotly debated issues in the entire ratification debate centered on the question of what rights were embodied in the treaties and the amendments. The Carter Administration, for example, argued consistently that the leadership amendments did nothing more than confirm rights already guaranteed by the treaties. Thus it is impossible to determine with certainty whether a question mentioning, e.g., the right to "always send

troops to keep the Canal open" belongs in category three or four. Further, Moffett includes several questions in category four which assert rights which go well beyond any reasonable interpretation of the leadership amendments. This is most clearly the case with questions 26b and 30, which refer to the right of the U.S. to "intervene" to keep the Canal open. In fact, the first leadership amendment specifically prohibits the U.S. from "intervention in the internal affairs of Panama."

Given these and other problems with Moffett's scheme, a new category system was developed for this study. The results of its application are shown in Table 2. Questions categorized in Group I ask the respondent's opinion on the eventual disposition of the Canal, but make no mention of any treaty. Group I is further divided into Subgroup IA, questions which give the respondent two alternatives from which to choose, and Subgroup IB, questions which give the respondent only one alternative to which to respond. Questions in Group II make reference to a treaty on the Panama Canal, but do not mention any residual rights given to the U.S. under that treaty. It is further divided into Subgroup IIA, questions which mention transfer of the Canal to Panama under the treaty, and Subgroup IIB, questions which do not mention transfer of the Canal (i.e., mention only the treaty). Questions in Group III make reference to residual U.S. rights to defend, transit or operate the Canal. It should be noted that of 50 questions, only one (#31) presented any problems of classification. It was placed in Group IIA on the grounds that the major thrust of the question fit that category better than the alternative, Group III. Question 19b, which was included in Table 1 for the sake of convenience, was not coded in this analysis.

An examination of Tables 1 and 2 supports six important conclusions concerning polls on the Panama Canal treaties. First, responses to questions <u>within</u> each of the

Table 2: National Polls on the Panama Canal Treaties, Grouped by Question Content

GROUP I - EVENTUAL DISPOSITION OF THE CANAL ONLY

Subgroup IA - Two Alternatives Specified

Question	Date*	Pollster	Respondents	% Pro	% Con	% Other	
1a	6/75	ORC	All	12	66	22	
2	4/76	ORC	All	12	75	13	
8	5/77	ORC	All	8	78	14	
29a	2/78	ORC	All	19	72	9	
				12.8	72.8	14.5	IA AVERAGES

Subgroup IB - One Alternative Specified

Question	Date	Pollster	Respondents	% Pro	% Con	% Other	
3	5/76	CBS/NYT	All	24	52	24	
5	6/76	CBS/NYT	All	22	57	21	
				23.0	54.5	22.5	IB AVERAGES

GROUP II - REFERENCE TO TREATY

Subgroup IIA - Reference to Transfer of Canal

Question	Date	Pollster	Respondents	% Pro	% Con	% Other	
1b	6/75	ORC	All	29	48	23	
9	5/77	Caddell	?	27	51	22	
10	8/77	NBC	All	27	55	18	
13	9/77	Caddell	?	26	49	25	
14	9/77	AP	?	29	50	21	
18	10/77	NBC	Aware	30	61	9	
19	10/77	Harris	All	26	51	23	
20a	10/77	CBS/NYT	All	29	49	22	
22	11/77	Seasonwein	?	28	59	13	
23a	12/77	Caddell	?	26	53	21	
25	1/78	CBS/NYT	All	29	51	20	
26a	1/78	NBC	Aware	28	62	10	
31	3/78	NBC	Aware	35	55	10	
32b	4/78	Harris	All	29	60	11	
33a	4/78	CBS/NYT	All	30	53	17	
39	9/78	NBC	All	34	56	10	
				28.9	53.9	17.2	IIA AVERAGES

Table 2: Continued

Subgroup IIB - No Reference to Transfer of Canal

Question	Date	Pollster	Respondents	% Pro	% Con	% Other	
4	6/76	Roper	All	26	46	28	
6	1/77	Roper	All	24	53	23	
12	8/77	Roper	All	28	44	28	
15	9/77	Roper	All	27	53	20	
17	10/77	Caddell	?	30	55	15	
21a	10/77	Roper	All-Split	31	50	19	
28a	2/78	Harris	?	31	40	29	
34	4/78	Harris	All	37	44	19	
37	6/78	Roper	?	30	52	18	
38	6/78	Harris	All	35	49	16	
				29.9	48.6	21.5	IIB AVERAGES

GROUP III - REFERENCE TO RESIDUAL RIGHTS

Question	Date	Pollster	Respondents	% Pro	% Con	% Other	
7	3/77	Yankelovich	All	29	53	18	
11	8/77	Gallup	Aware	39	46	15	
16	9/77	Gallup	All	36	46	18	
20b/20a	10/77	CBS/NYT	All	63	24	13	
21b	10/77	Roper	All-Split	33	47	20	
23b	12/77	Caddell	?	49	30	21	
24	1/78	Gallup	All	43	37	20	
26b	1/78	NBC	Aware	65	25	10	
27	2/78	Caddell	?	47	37	16	
28b/c	2/78	Harris	?	38	33	29	
30	2/78	NBC	Aware	54	40	6	
32a	4/78	Harris	All	49	41	10	
32c/d	4/78	Harris	All	44	39	17	
33b	4/78	CBS/NYT	All	51	35	14	
35	5/78	NBC	All	47	42	11	
36	5/78	Yankelovich	All	33	50	17	
40	10/78	NBC	All	45	47	8	
41	11/78	NBC	Voters	38	49	13	
				44.6	40.1	15.3	III AVERAGES

* Date based on date of earliest interviews, when known

first four categories (IA, IB, IIA, IIB) are remarkably similar. Regardless of differences in time, sample, pollster and question, variation in any particular response type (Pro-Con-Other) is never greater than 15 percentage points within any particular question category (IA, IB, IIA, IIB). Further, there is no evidence of any major trend over time for increased support of the treaties within any of the four question categories. Second, responses to questions in Group III show enormous variation. Further, they do seem to follow a temporal pattern, from opposition to support back to opposition. It would be unwise to conclude from this, however, that public opinion underwent two "turnabouts." Instead, the changes in response seem to reflect changes in the questions asked. In general, the more explicit and extreme the statement of residual rights in the question, the greater the amount of agreement with the question. Thus questions that mention the ability of the U.S. to "always send in troops" or the "right to intervene" (numbers 20b, 26b, 30) elicit approval responses in the range 54-65%. Caddell's milder and more ambiguous "defend the Canal forever" phrase (numbers 23b and 27) receives 47-49% approval. Simple mentions of the right to "defend" the Canal (numbers 7, 36, 40 and 41) lead to approval rates of 29-45%. While this analysis is complicated by the great diversity of questions asked, the general pattern does seem clear and provides simple explanation for the apparent temporal pattern in the responses to Group III questions. What appears to have changed over time is not the beliefs of the respondents but instead the questions they were given to answer.

Turning next to comparisons between categories of questions, the third conclusion is that the nature of the choice offered to the respondent strongly influenced responses. Questions in both Subgroups IA and IB ask the respondent's opinion as to the eventual disposition (ownership and/or control) of the Canal without reference to any treaty. But only those in Subgroup IA offer a choice between two <u>defined</u> alternatives. While questions in the two subgroups differ in other respects as well, those other differences

are of degree (ownership and control vs. control, indeterminate time frame vs. eventually) not kind. This suggests that the crucial difference is the number of defined alternatives. Interestingly, of all of the questions asked on the Panama Canal only the ORC questions in Subgroup IA and Roper's highly ambiguous questions on modifying the treaty or keeping it the same in Subgroup II (numbers 4,6, 12, 15 and 21a) offer two defined alternatives. It would have been interesting to know, for example, what responses might have been given during the period of the ratification debate (February-April, 1978) to a question which gave the alternatives of approving the proposed treaties or renegotiating new ones.

The fourth conclusion, based on a comparison of the questions in Groups I and II, is that the mere mention of the word "treaty" had a major impact on responses. This is shown most clearly in the responses to questions 1a and 1b, asked sequentially of the same sample. Given the choice between keeping the Canal or giving it to Panama, the overwhelming sentiment was to keep it (1a). But given a negotiated treaty turning over ownership and control to Panama, opposition drops to a plurality and support more than doubles (1b). Clearly a fifth of the sample did not change their opinions on the Canal in the brief interval between questions. Instead, it seems more plausible to argue that Americans value legality and 'keeping our word.' One evidence of this is the fact that the leadership amendments to the Neutrality Treaty were the first added to any treaty by the Senate in fifty years (Hogan, forthcoming). It seems that for at least some Americans, the mere existence of a treaty is enough to win their support for ratification of that treaty, even if they do not agree with its provisions. One merit of this argument is that it allows us to make sense of the widely divergent findings of the various February, 1978, polls. It also suggests that approval of the actual provisions of the treaties (i.e., their effects) may have been substantially lower than most polls seemed to indicate.

The fifth conclusion, based on a comparison of Subgroups IIA and IIB, is that mentioning transfer of ownership and/or control had little if any effect on responses. This finding is especially significant, in that it is almost an article of faith among treaty supporters that any bald reference to the notion of transfer somehow biased responses against the treaties. This attitude can be seen in Moffett (1985) but is perhaps clearest in an article by Harvard Professor William Schneider which appeared in the Washington Post at the beginning of the ratification debate and was promptly read into the record of the debate by pro-treaty senators. Under the subhead "'Control Is the Key Word," Schneider claims:

> A Look at all the questions asked over the past year reveals that "control" of the canal has long been the key issue to the American public. Any question which specifies that the United States will hand over control of the canal to Panama elicits a strongly negative public reaction--unless the meaning of "control" is further qualified. (Schneider, 1978, C1.)

There follows much discussion about the "primordial" attachment of Americans to the Canal and of "property rights" as the "most fundamental of American values" (1978, C4). Unfortunately, there is little support for this view in Table 2. As one moves from Group IIA, questions which mention the treaties and transfer of the Canal, to Group IIB, mention only of the treaties, support remains the same and opposition changes only marginally (about 5%). Even the change in opposition is unclear, however. It could just as easily be attributed to the general vagueness of the questions in Group IIB as to any impact of the magical word "control." Similarly, comparison of the responses to question 1a with those to questions 1b and 9 strongly suggests that the word "treaty" is a much more powerful force than any reference to ownership or control.

The sixth conclusion, based on a comparison of Groups II and III, is that information concerning residual rights to defend, transit or operate the Canal had a major impact on responses. One indication of this is the fact that all of the eleven questions

Table 3: Reversals in Opinion, by Pollster

Pollster	Date*	Question	Group	% Pro	% Con	% Other
Caddell	12/77	23a	IIA	26	53	21
		23b	III	49	30	21
CBS/NYT	10/77	20a	IIA	29	49	22
		20b/a	III	63	24	13
	1/78	25	IIA	29	51	20
	4/78	33a	IIA	30	53	17
		33b	III	51	35	14
Gallup	9/77	16	III	36	46	18 (Total sample)
	1/78	24	III	43	37	20 (Total sample)
Harris	2/78	28a	IIB	31	40	29
		28b/c	III	38	33	29
	4/78	32a	III	49	41	10
		32b	IIA	29	60	11
		32c/d	III	44	39	17
	4/78	38	IIB	37	44	17
NBC	1/78	26a	IIA	28	62	10
		26b	III	65	25	10
	2/78	30	III	54	40	6
	3/78	31	IIA	35	55	10
	5/78	35	III	47	42	11
	9/78	39	IIA	34	56	10

* Date based on date of earliest interviews, when known

that elicited positive responses to the treaties fell into Group III. A better indication is given in Table 3, which lists all instances in which a given pollster, in the same or sequential polls, charted a reversal in opinion from opposition to support or from support to opposition of the treaties. In 13 of the 14 instances, the "reversal" involved a change of questions from Group II to Group III or from Group III to Group II. In some cases, especially the October CBS poll and the January NBC poll, the reversals were spectacular. The sole exception is the reversal charterd by Gallup using identical Group III questions. But this merely confirms the peculiar nature of the Gallup findings, a subject to which we will return below.

Given this discussion, the pattern of findings across all 41 polls is fully comprehensible. The general pattern of an increase in support for the treaties through April of 1978, followed by a sharp decrease, appears to be a simple function of the tendency for the various pollsters to change their questions, in order, from Group I to Group II, from Group II to Group III, and then from Group III back to Group II. In particular, the cluster of results favoring the treaties obtained in the first four months of 1978 appears to be the simple result of pollsters asking a large number of Group III questions. Seen in this way, there is no evidence of any major trend for or against the treaties throughout the period of study. This strongly confirms the conclusions of Roshco and Moffett to the effect that public opinion on the Canal treaties was static. At most, there may have been a slight increase in approval, something on the order of 5% or less, after the treaties were ratified in mid-April of 1978. The rather slender evidence for this comes from the four Group II questions asked after ratification (numbers 34, 37, 38 and 39). In each case, pro-treaty responses were at or substantially above the relevant category mean; three of these responses were among the four highest responses ever recorded for Group II questions.

Evaluation of Polling Practices

If one accepts the conclusion that public opinion on the Panama Canal treaties was static throughout the period of their negotiation and ratification, the problem is then to determine why so many knowledgeable observers formed the erroneous impression that public approval of the treaties had increased. The hope, of course, is that understanding what happened in this instance might help students and practitioners of public opinion to prevent its re-occurrence. Two obvious sources of influence on perceptions of public opinion are the polls themselves and their coverage in the news media. Accordingly, this section will examine the polls on the Canal treaties in an

attempt to identify any practices which might have contributed to the misinterpretation of their findings. The following section will evaluate coverage of the polls in selected national news media. The final section will address possible solutions.

One source of difficulty should be obvious from the preceding section. Given the great number and variety of questions asked, it was perhaps inevitable that some observers would see illusory trends in the results. Part of this variety was due simply to the large number of pollsters who fielded surveys, and cannot be helped. But the variety also stemmed from a marked tendency for individual polling organizations to change their questions frequently. Indeed, only ORC and Roper asked the same question more than twice, some pollsters (eg, Harris) never asked the same question twice, and in all the 10 pollsters asked 39 different questions out of a total of 50. Whatever the reason for this practice, it does seem likely that it contributed to misinterpretation and might be amenable to change.

Differences in questions, while important, cannot account for the <u>systematic</u> misinterpretation of the findings. Faulty questions and interpretive procedures can. Thus all of the 50 questions on the Canal treaties were analyzed to see if they were erroneous, crucially ambiguous, or biased. The results of this process are shown in Table 4.

In this analysis a question was coded as having an <u>error</u> if it contains a factual untruth. Of the 50 questions, 11 contain errors. It should be noted that many more errors could have been counted. For example, a number of questions refer to the Panama Canal <u>treaty</u>, when in fact there are two. Or again, several polls claim that the treaties or amendments "made certain" or "guarantee" that the U.S. will have certain rights. It is not at all clear that any document can support claims of that level of certainty. More disturbing are those questions which imply that the Canal will be transferred only in or after the year 2000. For example, three

Table 4: National Polls on the Panama Canal Treaties, Problems with Questions

Question	Group	Date*	Pollster	Error	Ambiguity	Bias Pro	Bias Con	Valid Questions % Pro	Valid Questions % Con	Valid Questions % Other
1a	IA	6/75	ORC		X		X			
1b	IIA	6/75	ORC		X		X			
2	IA	4/76	ORC		X		X			
3	IB	5/76	CBS/NYT	X	X					
4	IIB	6/76	Roper		X					
5	IB	6/76	CBS/NYT	X	X					
6	IIB	1/77	Roper		X					
7	III	3/77	Yalkelovich	X	X					
8	IA	4/77	ORC		X		X			
9	IIA	5/77	Caddell		X		X			
10	IIA	8/77	NBC	X	X					
11	III	8/77	Gallup	X			X			
12	IIB	8/77	Roper		X					
13	IIA	9/77	Caddell	X						
14	IIA	9/77	AP					29	50	21
15	IIB	9/77	Roper		X					
16	III	9/77	Gallup			X				
17	IIB	10/77	Caddell					30	55	15
18	IIA	10/77	NBC				X			
19	IIA	10/77	Harris	X						
20a	IIA	10/77	CBS/NYT					29	49	22
20b/a	III	10/77	CBS/NYT		X					
21a	IIB	10/77	Roper		X					
21b	III	10/77	Roper					33	47	20
22	IIA	11/77	Seasonwein				X			
23a	IIA	12/77	Caddell					26	53	21
23b	III	12/77	Caddell		X					
24	III	1/78	Gallup			X				
25	IIA	1/78	CBS/NYT					29	51	20
26a	IIA	1/78	NBC				X			
26b	III	1/78	NBC		X					
27	III	2/78	Caddell		X					
28a	IIB	2/78	Harris					31	40	29
28b/c	III	2/78	Harris	X		X				
29a	IA	2/78	ORC		X		X			
30	III	2/78	NBC		X		X			
31	IIA	3/78	NBC	X		X				
32a	III	4/78	Harris			X				
32b	IIA	4/78	Harris					29	60	11
32c/d	III	4/78	Harris	X		X				
33a	IIA	4/78	CBS/NYT					30	53	17
33b	III	4/78	CBS/NYT			X				
34	IIB	4/78	Harris					37	44	19
35	III	5/78	NBC			X				
36	III	5/78	Yankelovich	X	X	X				
37	IIB	6/78	Roper					30	52	18
38	IIB	6/78	Harris					35	49	16
39	IIA	9/78	NBC					34	56	10
40	III	10/78	NBC			X				
41	III	11/78	NBC			X				

* Date based on date of first interviews, when known

CBS questions (numbers 20a, 25 and 33a) describe the treaties as "granting control of the Panama Canal to the Republic of Panama in the year 2000." In fact, the treaties provide for control to be given to Panama gradually, with the process ending in the year 2000. But the process will be substantially complete well before the year 2000. Thus the CBS wording tends to bias the question in favor of the treaties.

In the end, none of the above were counted as errors, on the grounds that they are either too trivial to be of concern or too debatable to be clear errors of fact. Of the 11 statements that were coded as errors, six (questions 3, 5, 7, 10, 19 and 36) use the words "return control", "giving back" or "hand control back" to describe the transfer of the Canal to Panama. Given that Panama never had control or possession of the Canal, it is erroneous to speak of returning it or giving it back. The remaining five errors are diverse. Question 11 states "The proposed new treaty . . . calls for the U.S. to turn over ownership of the Canal to Panama at the end of the century. However, the U.S. will retain control over the land and installations necessary to operate and defend the Canal." The second sentence, of course, is simply false; if it had been true it is unlikely that there would have been a major debate over the treaties. Question 13 speaks of "a treaty to return some parts of the Canal, the Canal Zone, and operating revenues of the Canal to Panama." Both "return" and "some" are erroneous. Question 28b states "The original treaties have been changed to allow the use of U.S. military force to defend the canal in any emergency and to allow U.S. warships priority in going through the canal in an emergency." Given that Moffett (1985, 214) and Roshco (1978, 559) date this poll in February, and that the leadership amendments to which it seems to refer were not passed until March, the statement is false. Question 31 includes the statement that the Senate has passed a treaty

"guaranteeing the right of the United States to intervene to defend the canal." This was counted as an error because the first leadership amendment specifically rejects U.S. intervention; at the very least, this is a highly biased description of the terms of the treaty. Finally, question 32c states that "the second treaty has been changed to allow the use of U.S. military force to defend the canal in an emergency and to allow U.S. warships priority in going through the canal in an emergency. This is followed by a question (32d) which asks for approval or disapproval of the "second" treaty; an earlier question (32a) asked for approval or disapproval of the first treaty. Again the description in the question seems to refer to the leadership amendments. But those amendments were added to the first (Neutrality) treaty, not the second (Panama Canal). Given the followup question, this relatively minor error becomes both serious and biasing.

In the next step of the analysis, an attempt was made to identify those questions which, in the context of the treaty debate, were ambiguous. The term "ambiguous" is used here in a very narrow sense to denote questions which either do not refer to a treaty or do not refer clearly to the Carter treaties in one or another of their possible forms. Twenty-one questions were identified as ambiguous; they fall into four distinct groups.

The first group includes all questions (numbers 1a, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 29a and 36) which make no reference to any treaty but instead ask about the policy of giving the Canal to Panama. Included here are all of the Group I questions. It should be stressed that these questions may give a very clear indication of attitudes toward that policy. But they become ambiguous when used to infer attitudes toward the specific treaties proposed by the Carter Administration. As many treaty supporters have argued, one could reject the general policy of giving the Canal to Panama but still accept the Carter treaties with their various safeguards of U.S. interests.

The second group consists of five Roper questions (numbers 4, 6, 12, 15 and 21). All are based on the question "Do you think the time has come for us to modify our Panama Canal treaty, or that we should insist on keeping the treaty as originally signed?" The problem here is that there was widespread consensus among both treaty supporters and opponents (including Ronald Reagan) in 1977-78 that the original treaties should be modified. They disagreed over the nature of the required changes. Because the question makes no reference to the specific modifications embodied in the Carter treaties, it would be quite reasonable for a staunch opponent of those treaties to answer that the original treaties should be modified. Thus these questions tell us nothing of any clarity about support for the Carter treaties.

The third group consists of three questions used before the Carter treaties were signed (numbers 1b, 9 and 10). All ask whether "a" treaty giving ownership and/or control of the Canal to Panama should be negotiated or, if negotiated, approved by the Senate. Thus these questions elicit attitudes toward an imagined treaty with only a single provision, transfer of ownership and/or control. As treaty supporters would argue, there is no necessary relationship between these attitudes and attitudes toward the Carter treaties with their more extensive and complex provisions.

The fourth group consists of five hypothetical questions (numbers 20b, 23b, 26b, 27 and 30) which ask if respondents would support the treaties if they contained certain guarantees of U.S. rights. For example, CBS asked (20b): "Suppose you felt the treaties provided that the United States could always send in troops to keep the Canal open to ships of all nations. Would you then approve of the treaties?" An affirmative response to this question could have at least three meanings: support for the Carter treaties as originally negotiated, support for the treaties with the leadership amendments, or support for the treaties only with the stronger conservative amendments. It all depends on which version of the treaties the respondent believes

embodies the right described in the question. Nor can the issue be resolved by referring to the three versions of the treaties themselves, because the meaning of each was in dispute. Indeed, the question of what rights were guaranteed by the various versions of the treaties was the dominant focus of the entire ratification debate. In particular, conservative opponents of the treaties claimed that only the proposed conservative amendments gave the U.S. the rights described in these five questions. Thus because an affirmative response to these questions could imply either support or rejection of the original treaties or the treaties with leadership amendments, they are inherently ambiguous.

The final part of the analysis sought to identify questions which are biased for or against approval of the treaties. A biased question is defined as one that asserts as true an issue that is the subject of serious contention. Two such issues are mentioned in the questions.

The first issue is the question of ownership of the Canal and Canal Zone. Treaty opponents claimed ownership, literal or metaphorical, by the U.S.; treaty supporters argued that under the terms of the original treaty Panama retained ownership but allowed the U.S. to exercise the rights of ownership and sovereignty. For present purposes, it is irrelevant which of these views might be true. Suffice it to note that the isuue is still the subject of dispute and was hotly contested at the time of the treaty debate. Eleven questions (numbers 1a, 1b, 2, 8, 9, 11, 18, 22, 26a, 29a, and 30), however, assert or imply U.S. ownership. Because they tend to support the arguments of the treaty opponents, they were coded as biased against approval of the treaties.

The second issue is the question of U.S. rights under the treaties. As noted above, the leadership amendments were intended to clarify these rights but treaty opponents claimed that they failed to do so. Again, it is irrelevant which side is true. The point is that there was and is extensive disagreement as to whether the treaties with leadership amendments do in fact give the U.S. the right to defend the Canal and the right to priority passage in case of need or emergency. Similar disagreements exist as to whether the treaties insure the neutrality of the Canal after the year 2000. But 11 questions (numbers 16, 24, 28b, 31, 32a, 32c, 33b, 35, 36, 40 and 41) clearly state that the U.S. would have these rights under the treaties or, in one case, that the treaties "made certain" (question 32a) that the Canal would be neutral after the year 2000. Because they strongly support the interpretation of the treaty supporters, these questions were coded as biased in favor of approval of the treaties.

Four important conclusions follow from this analysis. First, of the 50 questions asked about the Canal, 37 are erroneous, ambiguous or biased under the definitions given above. Because of these flaws, these 37 questions cannot provide a valid indication of the state of public opinion concerning approval of the treaties. This means, second, that our best estimate of public opinion on this issue is given by those 13 questions which are not flawed. These are shown in Table 4 with their results. Although the questions are of three types (Group IIA, IIB and III), were devised by six pollsters, and span a period of 14 months, they produced remarkably similar findings. When averaged, they show 30.9% support for the treaties, 50.7% opposition, and 18.4% other responses.

Third, a close inspection of Table 4 and the associated text reveals a systematic pattern in the kinds of question flaws that closely matches the general pattern of chnages in apparent approval of the treaties. Thus it seems likely that the pattern of results is the <u>product</u> of the flawed questions to some large extent. Recall that approval of the

treaties appeared to change from overwhelming opposition, to moderate oppsition (about 5 to 3 against), to varying levels of support, back to moderate opposition. We have shown previously that this closely matches the kinds of questions asked. Now we can see that not only were the earliest questions predominantly drawn from Group I, but also that Group I questions are ambiguous when used to determine levels of approval for the treaties. Given apparent strong opposition to the policy of giving control of the Canal to Panama, the early findings of apparently overwhelming opposition to treaty approval appear to be the result of asking ambiguous questions. Further, a number of early questions also appear to be biased against the treaty. Fully valid questions began to be asked only in September of 1977, and they revealed moderate opposition to the treaties. But at almost exactly the same time a new qroup of flawed questions appeared. These were drawn largely but not exclusively from Group III and tended to show varying levels of support for the treaties. In the first four months of 1978 these flawed questions dominated. More important, they are flawed in ways which tend elicit responses favorable to the treaties. This is obvious in the case of questions biased in favor of the treaties. But it is important to note that five of the last six ambiguous questions are those which asked if respondents would support treaties incorporating strong guarantees of U.S. rights. These invariably produced responses that appeared to favor the treaties. Further, <u>all</u> of the errors discovered tend to be errors that favor the treaties. And the most serious errors (those in questions 11, 13, 28b, 31 and 32b) tend to strongly favor the treaties. Thus we see that the apparent change from moderate opposition to support of the treaties occurs in response to questions which <u>all</u> incorporate errors, ambiguities or biases in favor of the treaties. The apparent "return" to moderate opposition after ratification occurs only when questions free from these flaws begin to dominate.

How did this pattern of flaws come to occur? In the case of the earliest questions, asked before the treaty negotiations were concluded, the explanation is obvious. In the absence of an actual treaty, pollsters had no choice but to ask questions about hypothetical treaties or about the policy of giving control of the Canal to Panama. These are perfectly valid questions to ask. The problem is not in asking them but in using their findings as a guide to public opinion about the treaties as actually negotiated.

In the case of the later flawed questions, asked after the treaties had been signed and tending to show support for them, the explanation is both more interesting and more disturbing. Question 20b, from the October CBS/New York Times poll, provides a convenient starting point for discussion. This is the first of the group of five ambiguous questions which asked if respondents would support the treaties if they contained strong guarantees of U.S. rights. Once again, this is a perfectly valid question to ask. The problem is in using its findings as a guide to opinion on the actual treaties. (It should be noted that this is an error that CBS and the New York Times did not make in their coverage of the findings.) The importance of this and similar questions is that they showed that the public would support treaties with strong guarantees. This created an increasingly difficult problem for pollsters. On one hand, treaty supporters claimed that the treaties, at least as strengthened by the leadership amendments, did provide these strong guarantees. On the other hand, when respondents were asked simply whether or not they approved of the treaties, they always registered disapproval.

A number of pollsters "solved" this problem by asking the questions that we have characterized as biased in favor of the treaties. Consider, for example, questions 28b and 28c from the February Harris poll:

b. The original treaties have been changed to allow the use of U.S. military force to defend the canal in an emergency and to allow U.S. warships priority in going through the canal in an emergency. In general, do you tend to agree or disagree with these changes in the Panama Canal treaty?

c. With the new changes, do you favor or oppose the proposed treaties with Panama on the Panama Canal?

Question 28c produced 38-33% support for the "changed" treaties. Two aspects of these questions require comment. First, question 28b is clearly an effort to inform respondents of the provisions of the leadership amendments. It is crucial to note that one would ask a question like this only if one assumed, at least provisionally, that at least a substantial number of respondents were ignorant of the leadership amendments. Second, question 28b attempts to describe the provisions of the leadership amendments. But as noted above, the Senate ratification debate was dominated by the question of whether or not the treaties with leadership amendments really did provide the rights supporters claimed they did. Nearly a third of the Senate decided in the end that they did not. But this disagreement is nowhere evident in the questions characterized as biased in favor of the treaties. Instead, all of them reflect the conscious or unconscious adoption of the pro-treaty position that the leadership amendments did in fact provide the rights.

It would be worse than useless to speculate why so many pollsters asked similarly biased questions toward the end of the ratification debate. Many good and innocuous reasons could be adduced. For our purposes, it is important only to note that no pollster ever sought to discover whether the American public felt that the leadership amendments provided those rights. The closest anyone came to this is ORC's question 29b, quoted in Table 1 above. It shows an overwhelming preference for the stronger conservative amendments over the leadership amendments. But even here there are problems. First, the question is arguably biased in favor of the conservative amendments. Second, the question tells us nothing specific about differing levels of support for the treaties with the leadership amendments or with the conservative amendments. Thus

we are forced to a fourth conclusion: in 41 national polls on the Panama Canal treaties, no one ever asked the crucial question.

This omission is understandable, of course, if the pollsters assumed public ignorance of the rights provisions of the treaties. After all, if one assumes ignorance of the provisions, it hardly makes sense to ask for opinions about different versions of the provisions. Further, the massive shifts from opposition to support of the treaties shown in Table 3 could reasonably be interpretted as the response of an ignorant public to information about the actual provisions of the treaties. Of course, these shifts could also reasonably be interpretted as the response of an informed but hostile public to the news, delivered by assumedly objective and prestigious pollsters, that the rights provisions had somehow been strengthened. But this explanation would not immediately occur to one who assumed an ignorant public.

That pollsters did assume public ignorance is shown by the questions they asked. It thus becomes important to ask why they made this assumption. The answer to this question leads to an examination of the Gallup polls on the Panama Canal treaties, to which we turn next

Gallup conducted a total of three nationwide polls on the subject of the Panama Canal treaties. The first appeared on September 4, based on interviews completed August 18-22. It began by asking the following question to establish the level of public awareness: "Have you heard or read about the proposed new treaty between the U.S. and the Republic of Panama regarding the Panama Canal?" The aware subsample (76%) was then asked a Group III question (number 11 in Table 1), the first of this group ever to mention the actual treaties.

The findings of this poll are noteworthy in several respects. It found opinion on the

on the reaties to be rather closely divided, with 39% of the aware subsample expressing approval and 46% disapproval. This approval figure is a full 10 percentage points higher than in any previous survey. More important, the Gallup news release dated September 4, 1977, stressed that college educated respondents were both more aware of the treaties (89%) and inclined to approve of them (49% approval, 40% disapproval). Thus in the very first Gallup poll, education was linked to awareness and approval. This link is reinforced in the release by quotations from three respondents: a "stock speculator" and "college professor" register approval of the treaties while a "retiree" expresses disapproval.

The second Gallup poll appeared on October 23, based on interviews conducted September 30 - October 3. It too began with a question to establish awareness (74%) and then introduced the following sequence of questions to establish knowledge of "key facts about the pact" (Gallup news release dated October 23, 1977) and levels of approval:

> As far as you know, in what year is the Panama Canal to be turned over completely to the Republic of Panama, by terms of the treaties? (Asked of aware subsample only. Correct answers: 1999 and 2000.)
>
> As far as you know, will the United States have the right to defend the Panama Canal against third-nation attacks after Panama takes full control? (Asked of aware subsample only. Correct answer: yes.)
>
> To the best of your knowledge, how much do the biggest U.S. aircraft carriers and supertankers now use the Panama Canal--a great deal, quite a lot, not very much, or not at all? (Asked of aware subsample only. Correct answer: not at all.)
>
> The treaties would give Panama full control over the Panama Canal and the Canal Zone by the year 2000, but the United States would retain the right to defend the canal against a third nation. Do you favor or oppose these treaties between the U.S. and Panama? (Asked of full sample.)

Answers to the knowledge questions, expressed in the Gallup release as a percentage of the <u>full</u> sample, were 26%, 43% and 14% correct, respectively. Only "one person

in 14" (7% of the total sample?) answered all three questions correctly. These respondents were designated the "better informed" group. As regards levels of approval, findings varied widely by subsample, from 23% Favor/39% Oppose among the unaware, to 40%/48% among the aware, to 51%/46% among the "better informed." For the total sample, the findings were 36% in favor and 46% opposed. Gallup's interpretation of these findings is provided by the October 23 news release. Under the superhead "Lack of information Is Widespread" and the headline "SUPPORT FOR PANAMA TREATIES INCREASES WITH KNOWLEDGE," the lead paragraph states: "The more Americans know about the Panama Canal treaties, the more likely they are to favor Senate ratification of the pact, lending support to President Jimmy Carter's thesis."

The third Gallup poll appeared on February 2, based on interviews conducted January 6-9. Again it began with a question to establish awareness (81%) and then repeated the four questions from the October poll. As reported in the Gallup news release dated February 2, 1978, answers to the knowledge questions expressed as a percentage of the full sample were 20% correct on year of turnover, 54% on defense rights, and 24% on usage. The size of the "better informed" subsample is not given in the news release, but according to the April, 1978, issue of The Gallup Opinion Index (p. 16) it is 5% of the total sample. Regarding approval levels, major shifts are apparent for all subsamples: from 33% Favor/17% Oppose among the unaware, to 45%/42% among the aware (now those "aware of "facts"), to 57%/39% among the "better informed." For the total sample, the findings were 43% in favor and 37% opposed. Under the supperhead "Among the 8 in 10 Aware of Facts" and the headline "U.S. PUBLIC OPINION SHIFTS TO SUPPORT OF PANAMA TREATIES," the February 2 news release states:

> Among the large majority of Americans who have heard or read about the debate over the pAnama Canal treaties, opinion is now closely divided with 45 per cent in favor and 42 per cent opposed. A survey taken three months ago showed opinion 48 to 40 per cent in opposition.

> The latest survey was conducted in early January and therefore does not reflect the possible effect of the Carter administration's "January offensive," a nationwide effort by administration officials to inform the American public about the key facts of the treaties.
>
> An important finding of this survey is that the more Americans know about the Panama Canal treaties, the more likely they are to favor Senate ratification, as seen in the views of the "better informed."
>
> The "better informed" are defined as those who are able to correctly answer three questions dealing with key facts about the treaties . . . .

We have described the Gallup polls in some detail in the belief that they were particularly influential in establishing perceptions of public opinion on the treaties. There are three reasons for this belief. First, for many people, the name "Gallup" is almost synonymous with opinion polls. Gallup poll results are widely published and, presumably, widely believed. Second, whether by accident or design, these polls were all released at crucial points in the ratification process. The first appeared a few days before the treaties were signed, the second appeared a week after the Carter-Torrijos "Statement of Understanding" was announced, and the third appeared just before the start of the ratification debate in the full Senate. Third, these polls produced several unique, and uniquely important, findings. One is the clear "turnabout" from opposition to support among all subsamples recorded in the second and third polls. This is the only such finding in consecutive polls using identical questions, but it was loudly proclaimed by Gallup and widely publicized by treaty supporters. Indeed, pro-treaty Senator Paul Sarbanes read the February 2 news release into the record of the Senate debate. The other important finding is the clear and consistent relationship between knowledge and support of the treaties. The Carter Administration had argued from the start that the public would approve of the treaties if they understood their details. And here was a highly respected poll that seemed to show just that. Further, because the Gallup polls were the <u>only</u> ones during the period of the ratification process to report findings on knowledge levels, it is tempting to conclude that these findings may have influenced other pollsters to assume a high level of ignorance among the general public.

Thus it may be that the Gallup polls were a major factor in establishing the belief that a "turnabout" in public opinion occurred and may also have contributed to the construction of flawed questions by other pollsters. If true, this would be quite unfortunate, because all three of the Gallup polls are themselves very seriously flawed. They are so flawed, in fact, that it would be difficult to draw any valid conclusions from their findings.

Four flaws require comment. The first, already noted above, is that the central question in the August poll (number 11 in Table 1) incorporates a highly erroneous description of the defense rights provided by the treaties. This error could reasonably be expected to bias answers in favor of the treaties. Regardless, it invalidates the central findings of that survey.

The second flaw involves the presentation of responses to the knowledge questions in the Gallup news release dated February 2, 1978. Recall that this poll showed a "turnabout" in opinion among all subsamples and increased support for the treaties among the "better informed." Recall also that both the February and October news releases stressed that "the more Americans know about the Panama Canal treaties, the more likely they are to favor Senate ratification." As shown in Table 5, the rate of correct responses to the three knowledge questions as presented in the February news release would seem to support this interpretation. Both the October and February releases presented the rate of correct responses solely in terms of a percentage of the full sample, even though the knowledge questions were asked only of the aware subsample. A comparison of the rate of correct responses for the two polls shows a net increase in knowledge. That is, while the percentage of correct responses to the year of turnover question declined from 26% to 20%, correct responses to the defense and usage questions increased, from 43% to 54% and from 14% to 24%, respectively. Computed across the full set of three questions, this shows a net increase in knowledge of 5%,

Table 5: Rate of Correct Responses to Gallup Knowledge Questions

Question	9/77 poll 10/77 news release		1/78 poll 2/78 news release		1/78 poll 4/78 Opinion Index	
	Full Sample	Aware Subsample*	Full Sample	Aware Subsample*	Full Sample	Aware Subsample
Year of turnover	26%	(35%)	20%	(25%)	21%	25%
Defense rights	43%	(58%)	54%	(67%)	44%	54%
Usage	14%	(19%)	24%	(30%)	16%	20%
Average	27.7%	(37.3%)	32.7%	(40.7%)	27.0%	33.0%

* Computed from information on the full sample provided by the news release. Figures for 9/77 poll confirmed in the 12/77 issue of The Gallup Opinion Index.

from 27.7% to 32.7%, for the full samples. The direction and magnitude of this change closely match the direction and magnitude of change in the approval responses for the two polls. This would suggest that the change in approval was produced by the change in knowledge.

But if we look at the results of the January poll as reported in the April, 1978, issue of The Gallup Opinion Index (pp. 15-24), the picture changes dramatically. There is good reason to believe that the Index report is more accurate than the news release. It includes much more detailed findings and was published later. If we assume that the Index data are correct, then it appears that the February news release incorporates two serious errors. First, the findings for the turnover and usage questions seem to have been transposed. This is corroborated by the fact that the Index and the news release report these questions in reverse order. Second, the news release appears to report the responses of the aware subsample as the responses of the full sample. The effect of these errors is to mask a very important finding. That finding is that the level of knowledge actually decreased across the two polls. In the case of the full samples, the decline was slight, from 27.7% to 27.0%. But in the case of the aware subsamples the decline was greater, from 37.3% to 33.0%. This decrease can also be

seen in the size of the "better informed" subsamples. The October news release gives the size of this group as "one person in 14" (7%?). The February news release makes no mention of the size of the "better informed" subsample. But the April Index states that this subsample constituted 5% of the full sample (i.e., one person in 20) in the January poll. Thus it appears that the size of the "better informed" group decreased from about 7% to 5% across the two polls.

If the above analysis is correct, we are left with a major paradox: an apparent increase in support for the treaties is associated with an apparent decrease in knowledge about them. Certainly, the Gallup polls provide no evidence at all the increase in support was produced by an increase in knowledge. But this very important finding is masked in the Gallup news releases by a disturbing pattern of errors and omissions, and by a change in the description of the aware subsamples from "those who have heard or read about the debate" (October news release text) to those "Aware of Facts" (February news release superhead). On the other hand, the polls do show consistently low levels of knowledge about the treaties and greater support for the treaties among the "better informed" subsamples. But these findings are also misleading, as we see next.

The third flaw in the Gallup polls is that the three questions concerning "key facts" about the treaties simply do not provide an adequate measure of knowledge about the treaties. In the first place, only one of the three questions is fully factual. This asks for the year in which the Canal will be turned over completely to Panama. One could question whether knowledge of the specific year is very important, especially since pollsters and journalists often used the term "at the end of the century" to describe this treaty provision, but at least the question does address a clear matter of fact. The question concerning U.S. defense rights does not. Remember that this question was asked in polls conducted before the leadership amendments had been proposed,

and, in the case of the September poll, before the "Statement of Understanding" had even been drafted. Thus both refer to defense rights provided in the original treaties. But these rights were the subject of widespread dispute, even among treaty supporters. Indeed, the leadership amendments were proposed specifically to clarify these rights. Thus one cannot assert, as the Gallup polls did, that the "correct" answer to these questions was "yes" at the times they were asked. If anything, the most correct answer was "don't know." Regardless, this question does not refer to a matter of fact but to a matter of widely disputed opinion. The third question asks "how much do the biggest U.S. aircraft carriers and supertankers now use the Panama Canal" and lists "not at all" as the correct answer. The problem here is that the central term in the question--"biggest"--refers to a completely ambiguous class of ships. Depending upon where one draws the boundary between "biggest" ships and other ships, any of the answers could be correct. Thus it is not a fact that the "biggest" ships do not use the Canal at all; it is a matter of conjecture depending upon the assumed definition of the central term. Further, one could seriously question whether this is one of the three "key" items of knowledge about the treaties. Certainly the American public did not seem to think so. The October Harris poll asked respondents whether they tended to agree or disagree with a series of "pro-treaty statements." One statement was: "The Panama Canal is not as important as it was, since big super-tankers and aircraft carriers can't go through it, so it is a mistake to make such a fight over our keeping control of it." Respondents rejected this statement 53% to 26%.

But if the three Gallup questions do not address "key facts" about the treaties, what do they address? The answer is clear from the Harris question above. All of the Gallup questions ask respondents if they accept key arguments in favor of the treaties. That is, treaty supporters stressed that the treaties would not turn over complete control until the year 2000, that the U.S. would retain defense rights, and that the Canal was increasingly irrelevant because some large U.S. ships could not use it.

Two conclusions follow from this discussion. First, the Gallup questions cannot provide an accurate picture of public knowledge about the treaties because they are needlessly specific, ambguous and biased. Second, the "better informed" groups are perhaps better described as those respondents who knew and accepted key pro-treaty arguments. Thus it is hardly surprising to find higher levels of support within these groups than in the full samples. Indeed, what is surprising is that even within these groups opposition to the treaties varied from 46% to 39%.

The fourth flaw concerns the sequence in which questions in the two polls were asked. There is at least some evidence for order effects on responses (e.g., Bishop, Oldendick and Tuchfarber, 1985). In this case, remember that the three "knowledge" questions were asked before the approval question. The approval question includes the "correct" answers to two of the knowledge questions. Thus respondents who answered one or both of those questions "incorrectly" would be informed of their "error" by the stem of the approval question. This may have biased responses in favor of the treaties.

Given this discussion, we are still left with the fact that the September and January Gallup polls show a clear "turnabout" from opposition to support of the treaties. How should this finding be interpretted? In seeking an answer to this question, it is vital to note that two other pollsters fielded identical or nearly identical questions in October and January. The CBS/New York Times poll asked question 20a in the period October 23-26 and identical question 25 in the period January 8-12. The NBC News poll asked question 18 in the period October 3-4 and nearly identical question 26a in the period January 10-11. As shown in Table 1, neither poll shows any evidence of an increase in support for the treaties. Instead, each registers a slight decline. This and the uniqueness of the Gallup finding suggest that the finding was simply spurious.

It should be stressed that the Gallup organization cannot be faulted for claiming that they had found a "turnabout" in public opinion. Although their question does seem to be biased and there may be problems of order effects, they at least asked the identical question across the two polls. It is only after careful post hoc analysis that we can conclude the trend they discovered may have been spurious. The practices of some other pollsters who found "turnabouts" are more questionable. Consider for example the following statements taken from an NBC News news release dated January 13, 1978. It describes the results of NBC's January poll (questions 26a and 26b).

> A majority of the American public continues to oppose ratification of the Panama Canal treaties in their present form. Among those respondents who have heard or read about the Canal treaties, 28% favor ratification by the Senate, 62% oppose ratification and 10% are not sure.
>
> In this survey we also asked whether the treaties should be approved if a clause were added giving the United States the right to intervene if the Panama Canal was threatened. Such an amendment recently was suggested by Senate Republican Leader Howard Baker. With this amendment, the treaties are favored by 65% of the public, while 25% would oppose an amended document and 10% are not sure. Those persons who oppose the treaties in their present form would favor the amended treaties by a two-to-one margin. So, although opposition to the treaties in their present form remains high, there seems to be widespread support for an amended pact with the Panamanians.

Consider also this statement taken from a draft of a CBS News news release dated April 13, 1978. It describes the results of CBS' April poll (questions 33a and 33b).

> On the eve of the Senate vote on the second Panama Canal treaty, a majority of Americans still express opposition to the treaties. That opposition, as in previous polls, changes to support when people are told of amendments to the treaties giving priority to U.S. ships in emergencies, and allowing the U.S. to protect the Canal's neutrality. As before, support for the treaties is strongest among liberals and the college educated.

These have the merit of leading with the responses to their simple Group II questions (26a and 33a). But both stress the "turnabout" induced by their Group III questions (26b and 33b) and both clearly equate the description of defense and transit rights in the questions with the leadership amendments. As noted above, this is especially problematic in the case of NBC and its use of the term "intervene," but neither release shows any sensitivity to the complex issues surrounding defense and transit

rights that emerged in the course of public discussion of the treaties. These problems intensify if we examine the Harris release dated April 3, 1978, that reports the results of the first April Harris poll (questions 32a-d).

SECOND PANAMA CANAL TREATY HAS SUPPORT

> By a relatively narrow 44-39 per cent, a plurality of the American people now favors the second Panama Canal treaty, scheduled to be voted on by the U.S. Senate during the last week of this month.
>
> This treaty gives control of the canal to Panama after the year 2000, with the provisions that in an emergency, U.S. military force will be allowed to defend the canal and U.S. warships will have priority in going through the canal. Without these provisions, Americans reject giving control of the canal to Panama by 60-29 per cent.
>
> The first of the two Panama Canal treaties was passed by the Senate last month by a 68-32 per cent margin. This is the so-called Neutrality Treaty, which specifies that the Panama Canal will be neutral after the year 2000, allowing ships of all nations to pass through it. According to a recent Harris survey of 1,199 adults nationwide, the Senate's vote is endorsed by the public by a 49-41 per cent margin.
>
> Although Americans now favor the two treaties by a narrow margin, they still are quite reluctant about handing over the canal. It was only the addition of the two key amendments dealing with the emergency rights for U.S. forces and warships--amendments supported by a 72-19 per cent majority--that tipped the public in favor of the second treaty.

It is highly instructive to compare the above release to the actual sequence of questions asked in this poll. Once again, the description of defense and transit rights in question 32c is equated with the leadership amendments. But the real problems involve the interpretation of the findings. The release leads with the claim, based on responses to question 32d, that a "plurality of the American people now favors" the second treaty. There is no hint that this level of approval was obtained only by informing the respondents of amendments to the treaties. If we assume that the American people were ignorant of these amendments, then this claim is simply false. Our best estimate from this poll is that they oppose the treaties 60% to 29%. And it is

clear that Harris makes this assumption. Otherwise, there would be no basis for claiming that the 60-29 response represents opinion on the treaties "without these provisions." But this assumption is itself questionable. Harris never asked if the respondents knew of the leadership amendments. All that was asked was whether they approved of the treaty giving control of the Canal to Panama (question 32b).

Given this discussion, the belief among many knowledgeable persons that public opinion on the Panama Canal treaties had changed from opposition to support is quite understandable. This beief could have been fostered by the sheer diversity of questions asked about the treaties. But more important, a systematic pattern of errors, ambiguities and biases in the questions asked by pollsters appears to have produced a pattern of findings that suggested a "turnabout." Finally, a number of pollsters, using questions and interpretations that appear to be founded on a belief that the American people were ignorant of key provisions of the treaties, claimed that a "turnabout" had taken place, or at least would occur if the leadership amendments were adopted.

Coverage of Poll Findings in the National Media

In this section we evaluate coverage of polls on the Panama Canal treaties in selected national media. A national medium is defined as one which reaches a cross-section of the entire American public or a substantial proportion of the American policymaking elite. The New York Times, Time, Newsweek, and the three commercial television networks were chosen for study. The data base for the study was compiled as follows. First, the New York Times Index for the years 1975-78 was examined and all stories which appeared under the headings of "Public Opinion" and "Panama" were copied for study. Second, all stories in Time and Newsweek on the Panama Canal treaties during the period of August, 1977, through June, 1978, were examined for references to public opinion. All stories containing such references were copied for study. Third, the

Vanderbilt Television News Index and Abstracts for the years 1975-78 was examined and all abstracts of stories under the heading "Panama" were copied. These were then analyzed to identify all stories which mentioned either public opinion or opinion polls. Videotape copies of these stories were then obtained from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive for study.

Examination of poll coverage in these six sources reveals enormous variation in amount, style and quality. The New York Times published nine stories providing specific poll results on the treaties, all in the period from August of 1977 to April of 1978. Results from six different polls were included: ORC for May, 1977; Gallup for August, 1977; Associated Press for September, 1977; and CBS/New York Times for October, 1977, January, 1978, and April, 1978. With one spectacular exception, coverage was generally both factual in tone and accurate. Coverage of the reversals in opinion generated by the questions asked in the October and April CBS polls was especially perceptive and restrained. This is apparent in the following description (New York Times, 4/14/78, A1/10):

> On the issue of the Panama Canal treaties, the poll showed participants still opposed to them, by a 5 to 3 margin, as the Senate vote on the second pact, due next Tuesday, approached. That margin has remained constant for six months.
>
> Only when interviewers pointed out that amendments had been added to the first pact, approved March 16, did a majority--51 percent--of those questioned say they approved of the treaties. The amendments, they were told, would allow the United States to send troops to defend the canal after Panama takes over in the year 2000 and would let American ships pass first in emergencies.
>
> But the poll showed clearly that the public does not yet count those changes as part of the treaties, which Panama could still reject after the Senate ratification process is completed.

One can question the Times' interpretation, but at least the methods used to produce the change in opinion are made clear.

The spectacular exception to the generally accurate coverage is provided by a story by Terence Smith (2/1/78, 4). It includes the passage:

> Last May, according to public opinion surveys conducted for the White House by the pollster Patrick Caddell, an overwhelming 87 percent opposed the treaties. Today, that figure has been reduced to 55 percent, according to White House sources.
>
> So, while the treaties have yet to win the approval of a majority of Americans, White House strategists believe that the change in opinion since last summer has created a political climate in which the required two-thirds of the Senate will find it possible to vote for them. . . .
>
> In a memorandum to the President on Nov. 1, Mr. Jordan reported that in public opinion polls the number favoring the treaties had improved by 30 to 35 points and that several key Southern senators had come around to supporting the pacts. By Nov. 30, another updating staff memorandum reported that 'all signs are now very promising' for ratification.

As both Roshco (1978, 356-7) Moffett (1985, 117-6) have pointed out, the 87% figure is apparently an erroneous reference to the May, 1977, ORC poll, and the 55% figure appears to be from a four-month-old Caddell poll. Jordan's 30-35 point swing appears to have been computed by the naive and erroneous expedient of subtracting figures taken from different questions asked by different pollsters at different times. The story is valuable, however, in providing an indication both of the importance placed on public opinion by the Carter Administration and their misunderstanding of it.

In Time, references to public opinion and opinion polls are sprinkled liberally throughout the coverage of the treaty debate. In August of 1977, two stories noted the ORC findings from May, 1977, but warned (5/29/77, 28) "figures could change drastically now that a treaty is in sight." That prediction was confirmed three weeks later when Time reported the results of the August Gallup poll and concluded that the new figures represented "an increase in support over earlier surveys" (9/19/77, 21). By February, there were cryptic assertions of polls showing a majority of Americans in support of the treaties. In March, Time reported the

results of the January Gallup poll. "Few times in recent history has a President mounted such a strenuous campaign to influence public opinion," the newsmagazine commented (3/27/78, 9), and the Carter Administration could "claim substantial credit" for the "turnabout." The "turnabout" was short-lived. In a June story on the findings of the May Yankelovich survey, Time reported without comment (6/19/78, 28): "Although Carter counts the Panama Canal treaty a distinct success, the voters who were polled feel otherwise. By 50% to 33% they consider it a mistake."

Newsweek charted a similar pattern in public opinion on the treaties. Again the reader witnessed a dynamic American public, rushing toward support for the treaties as the controversy progressed. In September, the newsmagazine reported figures from the August Gallup poll showing "46 percent of the electorate" (sic) opposed to the treaties and 39% in favor (Steele and Bruno, 9/12/77, 26). But in October, Newsweek dramatized an article on the impending debate by proclaiming (Newsweek, 10/24/77, 48) that: "polls indicate that something like 60 percent of the U.S. citizenry is either flatly opposed or doubtful" about the treaties. Finally, in February, the newsmagazine returned to the Gallup poll, reporting the January figures which showed "for the first time" a plurality in favor of the pacts. Unlike Time, Newsweek at least suggested that the Gallup figures indicated support for "amended treaties," thus helping to explain the change from the September figures. But still it concluded (Steele, et al., 2/13/78, 18) that the "public education blitz" by the Administration had produced a "remarkable turnabout" that would boost Carter's image and make the Panama campaign "the model on which the Administration will base its future campaigns for passage of other key legislation." It is hard to suppress the thought that this statement explains the fate of the subsequent SALT treaties.

Turning to the broadcast media, the pattern of coverage is similarly diverse. ABC does not appear to have reported any opinion poll results in its early evening news-

casts, relying instead on Senate vote tallies. On CBS, five stories aired between August and April mentioned specific poll findings. On August 11, 1977, an item included a quotation from Senator Jesse Helms, who cited the findings of the May, 1977, ORC survey. This was followed on September 21 with the results of the September Associated Press poll, on November 1 with the results of the October CBS poll, and again on April 13 with two items on the April CBS poll. Of these, only the two CBS/New York Times polls received any substantial coverage. As with the New York Times, reporting was generally factual and accurate. In particular, the results of the two CBS "reversal" questions (numbers 20b and 33b) were never mentioned explicitly and no attempt was made to assess the trend of public opinion.

NBC also aired five stories in which specific poll findings were mentioned in the period of August to February. On August 11, 1977, an item made passing reference to the results of that month's NBC poll. On August 22, Florida Conservative Union spokesman Mike Thompson reported partial results from the May, 1977, ORC survey. This was followed on September 21 with a brief item on the September Associated Press poll, on January 13 with a major story on the January NBC poll, and on February 28 with a brief item on the February NBC results. The January 13 item requires more careful examination. It was set up by a news analysis on the treaties broadcast on January 11. That segment included the claims that "indications are now that most Americans oppose the treaties" and that "public opinion polls have consistently shown a majority of the American people opposed to the Panama Canal treaties." But the January 11 item ended with a claim by NBC's congressional correspondent that "public opinion seems to be changing . . . so opponents of the treaty are worried." No evidence of any kind was offered for his assertion. Perhaps he had access to early findings from the January NBC poll. Regardless, on January 13 NBC built a major story around those findings. The transcript of that story follows:

Anchor: Senator Robert Byrd, the Majority Leader, said today that he will vote for the Panama Canal treaties and actively work for their passage. Byrd does want added language to clarify American rights, but his decision is an important victory for the Administration. Carol Simpson has more.

Simpson: Senator Byrd said he's convinced the Panama Canal treaties will assure continued American use of the waterway.

Byrd: Given the history of the Canal, given the principles of our own country, the treaties are in our interest, and ratification is the right step to take. I am announcing today that I will vote for the treaties and will work for their approval. Thank you.

Simpson: Senator Byrd was asked if Senate Republican Leader Howard Baker would also endorse the treaties. Byrd said he didn't know, but he said both of them agreed new language is needed to clarify the treaties.

Byrd: We have discussed it from the standpoint that we ought to work together in considering a parliamentary technique by which language can be attached, either by way of amendment, by way of reservation, interpretation, declaration, explanation, statement, doesn't matter what the label is, but the kind of language that would satisfy the concerns of the Senate, the concerns of the American people, and we will continue to work toward that end.

Simpson: Byrd predicted Senate floor debate will be heated and difficult. But he said he was cautiously optimistic the treaties would be approved. Carol Simpson, NBC News, at the Capitol.

Anchor: Senator Byrd's feeling that the Panama Canal treaties need some revision matches the feeling of the American public. A new NBC News/Associated Press poll out today shows that a majority of those polled across the country earlier this week feel the same way. Tom Pettit has details.

Pettit: An NBC/Associated Press poll shows most Americans still against the Panama Canal treaties as they now stand. (Video graphic 1 comes on screen: Yes 28% over No 62%) Only 28% say yes; 62% say no. But if the treaties were amended to give the United States the right to intervene against an outside threat, (Video graphic 2 comes on screen: Yes 65% over No 28%) 65% would say yes to ratification; 28% would say no. (Video graphic 3 comes on screen: YES in very large letters) "Yes" was the answer by most of the 1600 adults questioned this week by telephone, "yes" with the intervention amendment as a condition to giving Panama the Canal in the year 2000.

But if the treaties are actually amended as Senator Baker and others have demanded after visiting Panama, if the wording is changed, the people of Panama who voted to approve the treaties would have to vote all over again. To avoid another plebiscite,

> Secretary of State Vance and President Carter want any modifications put into a Senate resolution that could give us the right to intervene against an outside threat to the Canal, but not in Panama's internal affairs. Senator Byrd, after visiting Panama, wants a way, any way, to guarantee that right to intervene. And the NBC poll clearly shows the American people want the right to intervene spelled out. Tom Pettit, NBC News, Washington.

What is interesting about this story, of course, is that it explicitly links public support for the right to intervene to Senators Byrd and Baker, soon to introduce the leadership amendments which specifically abjure that right. The NBC News attitude toward conservative amendments designed specifically to obtain that right is shown by NBC final report of poll results, delivered by David Brinkley on February 28:

> In the Senate today, opponents of the Panama Canal treaties lost another vote. Their strategy is to load down the treaties with so many amendments that nobody will vote for them. In another attempt at this today they lost, 69 to 24. A new NBC News/Associated Press poll shows public support for these treaties has declined a little in recent weeks, but a majority of 54% of the public still supports them.

Gone now is any reference to the right of intervention specified in the question (number 30) and a change between the January and February polls from 65/28% in favor to 54/40% in favor (most likely caused by changes in question content and sequencing) is characterized as a "little" decline. And this was NBC's final reference to public opinion on the Panama Canal treaties.

Given this discussion, four general conclusions can be drawn about coverage of opinion polls dealing with the treaties. First, the quality of coverage varied greatly across the media studied. CBS News appears to have been the most accurate, closely followed by the New York Times. NBC News tended to use the polls largely as fodder for its arguments and, in the case of the February 28 report, was clearly misleading in its interpretation. Newsweek and especially Time treated results with reckless abandon. Second, in the period between January and March, four of these six national media asserted the existence of an actual or potential "turnabout" or change to support of the treaties based on poll results. Only CBS and ABC (which carried no

reports of poll results) resisted this practice. Another national medium, the Washington Post, could be added to this list. It published the major article by Schneider discussed above and regular reports of the Gallup polls. The most common basis for the claim of a "turnabout" was the Gallup polls, which cannot be faulted. But several items drew conclusions from comparisons across questions from the same pollster and, in the case of Time and the Smith article in the New York Times, across different questions from different pollsters. Third, there is an interesting element of selectivity in the findings which were publicized. The New York Times, Time, CBS and NBC all reported the findings of the May, 1977, ORC poll at the beginning of the ratification period. But we have been unable to find a single reference to the February, 1978, poll, even though it was widely quoted by treaty opponents. Although ambiguous when applied to support for the actual treaties, its findings might have provided an antidote to facile claims of a massive change in public opinion. Fourth, and perhaps most disturbing, there is no way that an intelligent reader could discover the misinterpretations of public opinion in media coverage because methodological details about the polls were simply omitted. In particular, only two items, both in the New York Times, ever included the exact texts of the questions asked. And only one item (New York Times, 1/18/78) ever included all of the information urged by the American Association for Public Opinion Research Standards of Disclosure. In the newsmagazines, almost no information was provided.

Conclusions

The story of the 1977-78 debate over the Panama Canal treaties should serve as a cautionary tale on the perils of opinion polling. Upon close inspection, it does seem that the primary result of extensive professional polling on a major foreign policy issue was the production of misleading findings which were used to frustrate the public will. There are at least four morals to the tale.

First, polling on Panama provides yet another demonstration of the great sensitivity of "public opnion" to the precise wording of questions. Pollsters have a responsibility to insure that their questions accurately frame the issue under study, and that the same questions are used to track opinion over time. Clearly, even minor variations of wording or procedure can produce spurious trends.

Second, it seems possible that at least some of the confusion over public opinion on Panama could have been avoided if poll users had been provided with more complete information about the polls. In this as in other instances, the press simply omitted the methodological details required by AAPOR and other professional polling organizations (Smith and Verrall, 1985). These standards may need to be revised to meet the constraints of the broadcast media (Smith, 1984). But whatever standards are ultimately chosen, pollsters should educate journalists in the necessity of adhering to them and insist that they do so. Arguably the most important item of information that should be provided in a report of poll results is the exact wording of any questions asked (Smith, 1984). But as we have seen above, it is this information that is most likely to be omitted by journalists. Thus pollsters should insist that this item of information be included in every report of poll results.

Third, in retrospect it seems clear that many of the later questions asked about the treaties were biased by pollsters attempting to inform respondents about key provisions of those treaties. Such an attempt is reasonable only if one assumes public ignorance about the provisions. Although a constant refrain of some treaty supporters, about the only evidence suggesting ignorance came from the Gallup polls on the treaties and, as we have tried to demonstrate, that evidence was very seriously flawed. Further, evidence suggesting relatively high levels of knowledge about the treaties abounded. At least two polls found awareness levels of 81%. Numerous polls found extremely high levels of intensity of opinion, especially among treaty opponents, and

issue salience is usually associated with issue knowledge. Several pollsters noted this explicitly. For example, the CBS/New York Times news release dated November 1, 1977, makes this comment about the 29% of their respondents who felt strongly enough about the treaties to say it would sway their votes for the Senate: "Those individuals were generally more politically knowledgeable, and, as might be expected, they were more likely to be found among opponents of the treaty. A full three-fourths of that intense group opposed the unclarified Panama Canal treaties, while only one-fourth supported the agreement." Finally, many treaty opponents were the recipients of the voluminous information provided by the various conservative organizations working to prevent ratification of the treaties. In short, there is at least some reason to believe that the public in general and treaty opponents in particular were well informed about the provisions of the pacts. The more important point is that pollsters must remember that the primary purpose of polling is to determine the state of public opinion on a topic. Discovering the bases of those opinions is clearly secondary. And loading questions with selected information that respondents "ought" to know is almost certain to lead to distortion.

The fourth conclusion follows from the third. The extended Senate debate on the Panama Canal treaties centered in the end on subtle differences of interpretation of the nuances of meaning and implication of a document designed to bridge the competing interests of conflicting parties. It is difficult to imagine any simple question or series of questions that could accurately reflect the complexity of this debate. ORC's question 29b, itself flawed, illustrates the nature of the problem. This suggests the need for a clearer recognition of the severe limitations of standard methods of public opinion polling. In the case of the Panama Canal treaties, those limitations were exceeded.

REFERENCES

American Institute of Public Opinion. "Panama Canal Treaties Gaining More Support as Awareness Grows." The Gallup Opinion Index, 153, April, 1978, 15-24.

_____. "Carter Thesis on Canal Treaties Basically Rights: Better Informed More Likely to Favor Ratification." The Gallup Opinion Index, 149, December, 1977, 1-14.

Bishop, G.F., R.W. Oldendick, and A.J. Tuchfarber. "The Importance of Replicating a Failure to Replicate: Order Effects on Abortion Items." Public Opinion Quarterly, 49, 1985, 105-14.

Boeth, R., et al. "Canal Showdown." Newsweek, April 24, 1978, 24.

Carter, J. Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President. New York: Bantam, 1982.

Hogan, J.M. "Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy: The Case of Illusory Support for the Panama Canal Treaties." Quarterly Journal of Speech, forthcoming.

Moffett, G.D. The Limits of Victory: The Ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Newsweek. "Vox Pop on Panama." Newsweek, October 24, 1977, 48.

New York Times. "Americans' Support for Israel Declines, a Poll Finds." New York Times, April 14, 1978, A1 & A10.

_____. "Public Confidence in the President on Economy is Found at New Low." New York Times, January 18, 1978, A1 & A16.

Roshco, B. "The Polls: Polling on Oanama--Si; Don't Know; Hell, No!" Public Opinion Quarterly, 42, 1978, 551-62.

Schneider, W. "Behind the Passions of the Canal Debate." Washington Post, February 12, 1978, C1 & C4.

Smith, T.J. "Standards for Reporting Public Opinion Research: A Reappraisal." Presented to the 39th Conference of AAPOR, Delavan, Wisconsin, May, 1984.

Smith, T.J., and D. Verrall. "A Critical Analysis of Australian Television Coverage of Election Opinion Polls." Public Opinion Quarterly, 49, 1985, 58-79.

Smith, T. "Carter Nears End of Long Drive for Canal Treaties." New York Times, February 1, 1978, A4.

Steele, R., and H. Bruno. "Stand Up and Be Counted." Newsweek, September 12, 1977, 26.

Steele, R., et al. "Heading for a Win?" Newsweek, February 13, 1978, 18.

Time. "Storm Over the Canal." Time, August 29, 1977, 28.

_____. "Now for the Hard Part." Time, September 19, 1977, 21.

_____. "Carter Wins on Panama.". Time, March 27, 1978, 9.

_____. "Carter Is Still Losing Support." Time, June 19, 1978, 28.

U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations. Senate Debate on the Panama Canal Treaties: A Compendium of Major Statements, Documents, Record Votes and Relevant Events. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979.